

Remarks

This is in response to the Office Action dated March 8, 2006. The Office Action first rejected claims 1 and 7-9 on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 15 and 17 of U.S. Patent No. 7,006,767. The Office Action then objected to claims 2 and 10-21 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, stating that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent format.

Applicants appreciate the recognition of allowable subject matter. In response to the double-patenting rejection, Applicants note that a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection over U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/902,806 issued in the Office Action dated January 26, 2005. Applicants filed a terminal disclaimer under 37 C.F.R. §1.321 on May 25, 2005 to overcome this rejection. The 09/902,806 application subsequently issued as U.S. Patent No. 7,006,767, which is the subject of the double patenting rejection of the present Office Action dated March 8, 2006. Accordingly, Applicants believe that no additional terminal disclaimer is necessary since the rejection in the present Office Action is overcome by the May 25, 2005 terminal disclaimer. As a result, claims 1 and 7-9 are allowable. It follows that claims 2 and 10-21 are allowable as being dependent upon an allowable base claim.

For the foregoing reasons, claims 1-2 and 7-21 are allowable. Applicants respectfully request that these claims be allowed and proceed to issuance.

Respectfully submitted,


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Date: June 7, 2006
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